

The Third Policeman review at Wellow Recreation Ground – ‘enjoyably absurd’



The cast of Miracle Theatre's The Third Policeman. Photo: Kristin Prisk

- [Theatre](#) by [Jeremy Brien](#) - July 7, 2017 Wellow

A favourite of James Joyce and Graham Greene, the work of enigmatic Irish satirist Flann O'Brien is a bold choice for an alfresco production. Cornwall's Miracle Theatre are no ordinary touring company though, having tackled *Waiting for Godot* four years ago in place of the traditional Shakespearean summer offering.

Now they have taken aim at O'Brien's cult comic novel. There are hints of *Father Ted* here, but mainly we are in the realm of the Irish Theatre of the Absurd, as a murder is committed right at the start to finance the search for the works of an eccentric scientist-philosopher.

Along the way policemen adopt the personalities of their bicycles, atomic theories are bandied around, and a ramshackle lift carries people to an eternity of fulfilled promises. There's darkness here but it struggles to register in the wide open playing field spaces.

Director Bill Scott and his four-strong cast wisely concentrate on the zany word play, the physical comedy and the increasingly bizarre array of characters, while managing the shock twist at the end with considerable style.

All four cast members are cyclists of near-Tour de France skill levels and Miracle Theatre stalwart Hannah Stephens brings some welcome discipline to the surreal action as the nameless story-teller. She's helped no end by Ciaran Clarke's cranky musical sound track.